

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 4581

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: P.N. DEMICHEV NAMED MINISTER OF CULTURE

REF: A. MOSCOW 17189 B. MOSCOW 8442

1. TASS ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT P.N. DEMICHEV HAS SUCCEEDED THE LATE YEKATERINA FURTSEVA AS USSR MINISTER OF CULTURE. EMBASSY'S INITIAL JUDGMENT IS THAT DEMICHEV'S APPOINTMENT IS ANOTHER PIECE OF BAD NEWS FOR SOVIET ARTISTS AND INTELLECTUALS CONSISTENT WITH RECENT INDICATIONS (REFTEL A). DEMICHEV NOW HAS BEEN GIVEN BOTH PARTY AND EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBILITY AS TROUBLESHOOTER IN THE TROUBLE-PLAGUED ARTS AND IDEOLOGY FIELD, ALTHOUGH PAST PRECEDENT SUGGESTS THAT HE MAY SOON MOVE OUT OF HIS PARTY JOB AS CPSU SECRETARY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARTS.

2. ONE OF THE TOUGHEST SPEECHES ON PERNICIOUS FOREIGN INFLUENCES ON SOVIET IDEOLOGY WAS GIVEN BY DEMICHEV ON MAY 31 (REFTEL B) IN ROUND OF PRE-ELECTION SPEECHES BY TOP POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. USING THIS AND OTHER INFORMATION WE HAVE ABOUT DEMICHEV IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT SOVIETS FEEL RECENT MAVERICK ACTIONS BY ARTISTS WERE ONLY SYMPTOMS OF GREATER POSSIBLE FUTURE DIFFICULTIES AND MUST BE CONTROLLED BEFORE WORSE FOLLOWS.
STOESSEL

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